

Braemar Buzzard



www.braemarbuzzard.org.uk



Winterwatch returns

BBC TV's 'Winterwatch' series returned to Mar Lodge Estate for a second successive year in January. Once again, the crew, presenters and cameramen were delighted with the facilities and the wildlife on view, despite losing the log cabin studio during a gale - and instead transferring indoors to film from the Mar Lodge Dining Room. Hoping for snow, after last year's wet & windy offering, they were not disappointed -



Winterwatch - towing in the production lorries



with plenty during arrival on site to make life a bit challenging, and during transmission a beautifully white winter background. The reward was some fabulous views of red squirrel, otter and pine marten, and amazing footage of dipper swimming under the ice. In a 'double whammy' this year, 'Blue Peter' also chose to get in on the action and send out a live programme with the Braemar schoolchildren as a willing audience.

Below: photo of a watercolour of Braemar sent in by Val Brassington. The artist was Caroline Greg and dated 1861 - entitled 'View from Braemar with Catholic Chapel'

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Editorial

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www.braemarbuzzard.org.uk

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For advertising: contact Maggie MacAlpine

☎ 013397 41245. Adverts cost £15 per eighth of page.

Deadline for copy for next issue:

Past and current editions of the Buzzard together with the 'live' events calendar (updated between issues) can be viewed online on our website: www.braemarbuzzard.org.uk Extra copies of the Buzzard can be obtained from the garage, the art gallery and also the newsagent/pharmacy. Donation tins are at all these outlets for any very welcome contribution towards costs.

Community Update:

Oil Club Following similar initiatives in other parts of Aberdeenshire, an Oil Club has been set up in Braemar and Inverey. The purpose is to help reduce fuel bills - by customers grouping together, a discount can be obtained for 'bulk delivery' of oil to the village. How does it work? An arrangement has been made with Highland Fuels whereby they will contact members of the Oil Club before a delivery with a price per litre and delivery date. If members wish to be included in the order (minimum order is 500 litres) they let Highland Fuels know. Deliveries will be at approximately 2 month intervals. Individuals are billed direct - payment is required in advance for the first order, after which billing is by invoice. The average saving to members is 3p per litre. Highland Fuels have a dedicated fuel club officer who deals with all the administration. There is no commitment to oil club members to order oil each time, there is no cost to join the club and members are free to buy oil elsewhere if they can get a better price - a win/win situation! If you missed the meeting in the village about the oil club, it's not too late to join in. The club co-ordinator is John Burrows, ☎013397 53244 email johnburrows1@btinternet.com (contact him in the first instance). The Highland Fuels club officer is Catherine Robertson crobertson@highlandfuels.co.uk

Community Update:

No more Rural... From March the SRWI is to become SWI (Scottish Women's Institute) as HQ have decided to drop the 'rural' in a bid to bring the organisation up to date and attract new members in the cities as well as the rural areas. In Braemar the SWI goes from strength to strength. After the slide show and talk by Charlie Denny on his latest trip to Gambia (February meeting) £100 was raised to give to the girls' orphanage that Charlie's group supports. In March there will be an evening of fun science with Liz Robertson as part of the Science Festival Week. On March 28th the Braemar SWI choir, led by Sue Sherrard, will represent Aberdeenshire at the annual choirs competition in Inverness.

New members and guests are always welcome, on the third Thursday of the month at 7.30pm, usually in the Colonel's Bed in the Invercauld Hotel, ☎41225 for details.

Tartan Trek - this year's trek, organised by CLAN Cancer Support, is taking place on **Saturday 9 May** and once again will follow a route through the Balmoral Estate with trekkers being able to choose either a scenic 15 km route or the shorter, family friendly 3.5 km castle route. The event raises awareness and funds for CLAN - who provide emotional and practical support to people affected by cancer across north-east Scotland, Moray, Orkney and Shetland. In Deeside, the charity operates in both Ballater and Banchory. For more information about CLAN's services in Deeside, or to register interest in this year's Tartan Trek, contact Gemma Powell on 01339 756318 or gemma.powell@clanhouse.org or visit www.clanhouse.org

Braemar Choir has started to meet again after the winter break. We meet at 7.15pm on Sunday evenings in Castleton hall, come along, join in and have fun singing. We are a very informal choir singing a variety of songs including pop, traditional, show tunes and classical. We are always adding new songs to our repertoire and try to include suggestions from all the members. Go on, make Sunday evenings your singing night, you know you want to. If you have any questions, ☎Sue 41516.

Masonic Lodge St Nathalan of Tullich-in-Mar's 200th anniversary is to be celebrated with a dinner and ceilidh on Saturday May 9th in the Albert & Victoria Halls, Ballater. For information and tickets contact the lodge secretary, Doug Bruce, at Sec259@StNathalan.org

Invercauld Estate News Angus McNicol, Estate Manager

It has been a funny winter. The snow arrived late and the hind cull on the hills, necessary to keep deer numbers at sustainable levels, was therefore slow to start at Invercauld as the hinds stayed further out and higher than normal, enjoying the relatively balmy conditions.

Inevitably winter came but, such was the wind that came with it, more of the snow landed in the gullies and valleys than on the tops and ridges of the mountains around Braemar. Then an early thaw saw spring-like conditions in mid-February with birds bursting into song and gamekeepers reporting golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria* active a good month earlier than normal. Who knows what nature will throw at us next although it would be a brave soul to declare that winter conditions are over.

Unlike the weather, what happens with the buildings in the village is however very much under human control. It felt quite eerie some evenings in Braemar when both the Invercauld Arms and 'the Fife' were closed. However I have a lot of optimism for Braemar. In the eight months or so I have been in the village, it has been very noticeable to me the resolve and clear desire of people here to make things happen. The Estate has a duty, and wants, to help with this as it knows how important it is for a place like Braemar never to stand still. One property in the village that clearly needs attention is the former Strachans shop. This building is very prominent in the village and is not in good condition with the most recent tenant moving out last year. The Estate would like to see this property turn the corner however and be a much better advertisement for Braemar. It needs a lot of work, particularly the harling, roof and windows; and of course it needs a sustainable use. We are investigating the works that are required and a few options for a new use with the hope that this building can, in its own way, help the village move forward. Nothing is going to happen overnight but improvements to the likes of the Fife and Strachans are needed and can only be a benefit in the longer term. And at least we can influence them - unlike the snow which I can see starting to fall as I write this article!



Braemar Golf Club Spring Update Michael Holley

The winter is usually a quiet spell for the Golf Club but not this winter. The committee set about the difficult task of replacing Robbie and Susan who have moved on after 17 years at the club. I am delighted to have been selected by the committee as the new Clubhouse Manager. As someone who grew up in the village only to move away in search of work in Aberdeen, I am excited about coming back to Braemar and thankful the committee have given me this opportunity. I will of course not be doing this alone and will have my brother Matthew coming to put his butchery and catering skills to good use in the kitchen.

We are always on the lookout for new members. Whether you have played golf before or not at all we have a range of playing memberships to suit. If you would like to know more please send me an email at clubhousemanager@braemargolfclub.co.uk and I'll be delighted to assist you. The Golf Club is not just on the lookout for golfers. We also offer a social membership for just £10. This will give you access to the Clubhouse where you will benefit from reduced prices on food and drink throughout the year. We also plan to put on a number of social events this year from Quizzes to Live Music to Tasting Evenings. With one bar less in the village we will be delighted to welcome you up to the Golf Club.

The Bar will open for the season on Friday the 20th March at 11am and the kitchen fully up and running on Friday 3rd April. We will have some special offers on Saturday 21st for the final day of the 6 nations and our first Quiz of the year will be on Saturday 4th April at 8pm. Stay tuned to our Facebook page and the Village Noticeboards for further events. We look forward to seeing you all at Braemar Golf Club in 2015.



NEW POP-UP LIBRARY

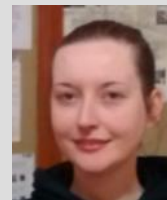
Liz Robertson

It took a little longer than originally planned, but it has eventually arrived - the new 'Pop Up Library' operating from Braemar's Visitor Information Centre (VIC). It's not quite the same as having a library in the village, but it's pretty good. There's a reasonable selection of books to choose from given the restrictions on space AND you can order in books from the library catalogue (free of charge) with a weekly delivery of books arriving every Wednesday. You can also return or renew books and the opening hours are excellent! 10am - 4pm seven days a week (i.e. when the VIC is open). It's basically a self-operated service, you scan the books in and out, but the VIC staff are on hand to help. Take your library card and your PIN number with you.

The Library Service has developed hugely over the last few years – if you have an iPad or similar device, there's a huge selection of e-books that you can borrow and of course download and read anywhere, plus a variety of e-magazines that you can also access. For book clubs, the Library Service has 'sets' of books available to loan (up to 15 books in a set) so that the whole book club can borrow and read the book at the same time. The library is a free service to everyone in the community - so it's a great time to dust down those library cards and get reading. If you aren't yet a member of Aberdeenshire Library Service, then the Braemar VIC staff can help to get you enrolled. What will happen to our current once-a-month library van visit? It is currently still operating but is under review.



Welcome! To the new YHA manager, Hayley-Louise Gater. She has worked with the YHA in Wales and Derbyshire, has also been a P & O cruise assistant manager and likes rock climbing. Look out for her pink car!



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Wendy Marr - Managing Director

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Paws for Thought



Names: Hamish and Minnie
Breed: West Highland terrier and Springer Spaniel
Age: 12 years & 11 years
Owners: Karen & David (Hampson)

Favourite (& least favourite) things:

Hamish - I look forward to our early morning walks and get very excited once I know we are getting ready to go out as I like to read and leave my daily 'p-mails' which are found at most lamp posts and trees around the village. I am always trailing behind because I have little legs and have to move quickly to keep up with Minnie, hopefully I'll get some doggy trainers soon. My favourite toy is a squeaky Father Christmas which only comes out once a year.

Minnie - I enjoy going on the riverside walk. It's just far enough for me in the morning as I am getting older and feel a little stiff when I first get up. The best bit for me though is swimming in the Dee, I love it. For some reason they don't let me go in when it's cold but then other times they put me in the water when I'm not ready - usually just after I have rolled in something lovely and smelly! I used to like chasing rabbits on my walks but they must have been doing some special training because they run much faster than me these days, so now I don't bother! Things I hate: that squeaky Father Christmas toy!

Councillor's Corner

Katrina Farquhar

☎013398 80836

☎(mobile) 0787 647 5403

Email: cllr.k.farquhar@aberdeenshire.gov.uk



Citizen Advice Outreach centres have been operating for a few months now in Braemar, Ballater, Lonach, Aboyne and Banchory. These appointments are confidential and can assist with a wide range of queries such as debt, housing, utilities, employment problems and consumer issues. The website address: www.westhillcab.org contact 01224 747714 or email

enquiries@westhillcab.casonline.org.uk

The outreach services are by appointment only but if you contact the main office they will organise a suitable time for you.

Wasteline: If you would like to book a Special Uplift of bulky items, buy a Wheeled Refuse Bin, request a free Recycling Container (you can also request a strap to prevent the lid of your bin always blowing open when windy) or report a Missed Collection or a problem relating to litter or street cleansing please call the **Wasteline** ☎0845 600 3900 (Mon-Fri from 8.0 am to 6.0pm).

There are some new funding opportunities that have recently opened, amongst others, the supermarkets are using the carrier bag levy to open small grants funds: **Asda Carrier Bag Community Grants** will provide up to £2,000 to help projects and good causes in their local communities **Sainsbury's Scottish Community Grants Fund** will award up to £500 annually to charities and local community groups for a range of projects and activities

<http://www.ccworks.co.uk/sainsburys.html>

New arrangements are now in place for accessing some council services in the Marr area of Aberdeenshire. The changes follow the end of reception facilities at the Aboyne area office. General queries for services previously accessed at the Aboyne council office can now be directed to 08456 081 207. All numbers are charged at local rate.

Deeside Knitwits are knitting flowers and mushrooms for the Braemar Creative Arts Festival in October. The flowers will be used to decorate the Cluny bridge in the centre of Braemar and the mushrooms, for a trail. The group is currently meeting at 'Taste' on the first Tuesday afternoon of the month (2-5pm) and subsequent Tuesday afternoons at 'The Bothy' - so bring your projects along and come and have a natter. Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/DeesideKnitwits> There is also a new knitter natter group starting up at Inchmarlo.

Riverbank Tree Planting on the Dee

Joanna Dick, Dee Catchment Outreach Officer with the River Dee Trust and Dee Catchment Partnership

Driving towards Glenshee from Braemar, you can see some small enclosures (4 x 4 metres) surrounding trees that have been planted along the banks of the River Clunie. You can also see a larger area fenced off to protect young trees planted on the



Clunie at Newbigging. Planting trees along the riverbank is part of restoring the river corridor to how it once was. This benefits the river by reducing bank erosion, alleviating flooding, providing habitat for wildlife and creating shading over the watercourse. This shading will be important in the future as temperatures are predicted to rise due to climate change. The trees are being planted as part of the Pearls in Peril LIFE project that aims to restore habitat for freshwater pearl mussels.

For more information visit www.riverdee.org or find the River Dee on Facebook www.facebook.com/TheRiverDee or follow us on Twitter [@RiverDeeTeam](https://twitter.com/RiverDeeTeam).

Braemar Castle News

Laura McMeekin

Braemar Castle reopens for the season on Saturday 4th April. 2015 marks 300 years since Bobbin' Jock turned Jacobite and began the Uprising in Braemar. 'Jacobites: Braemar's Risings' is our exhibition for this year, showcasing the Jacobite artefacts and telling all the local Jacobite stories, from the Black Colonel to Auld Dubrach, the last survivor of Culloden. There are new opening hours for this year which reflect that the castle now has a full-time staff member and the audio guides. Hours will be 10am-5pm Wednesday-Sunday, an extension of 3 days per week! However, our volunteer guides and shop assistants are still very much needed to provide our



visitors with the authentic Braemar experience and to tell the castle's stories. Apart from the exhibition, our first events will be Easter Afternoon Tea in the Drawing Room, (with the fire blazing) on the 5th April. Children can get crafty in the cabin with some Easter masks to make and take away. Sunday 19th April will be gruesome fun for everyone when Awful Ancestors take over the castle. Learn about gruesome medieval punishments and horrible medicine. Further dates for the diary are Murder Mystery Dinners on the 15th and 16th May and Jacobite Weekend 24th-26th July. I'll see you there!

Braemar Local History Group

- The AGM was held on Sunday 8th February followed by an entertaining talk from Simon Blackett, recently retired factor of Invercauld Estate, on many aspects of the estate.
- The group are looking volunteers to help with the very popular Local History walk which this coming year will include St Margaret's and the refurbished Kindrochit Castle.
- Future events include the John Lamont docu/drama (science festival), a talk by Peter Donaldson on 'Dowsing for Archaeology' and a field trip to Kincrochit Castle. For further information watch the noticeboards or visit <http://www.braemarlhg.com/>



Last Man Off - book talk Tuesday March 31st 7.30pm

New author, Matt Lewis, will be giving a talk in the village about his book 'Last Man Off'. The talk has been organised as a joint venture between the two Braemar book clubs but (as it sounds so good!) the decision has been made to invite anyone interested in the village to come along as well.

Matt was born in Bristol in 1974 and studied Marine Biology before working as a scientist aboard fishing boats. His first job at sea was on the Sudur Havid fishing for toothfish in Antarctic Waters - but a storm engulfed the boat hundreds of miles from land or rescue. The mundane fishing trip went fatally awry. As the title of the book suggests - Matt was the last man off the fishing boat and this is the account of the sinking and rescue. The Observer newspaper said "As true-life tales of endurance and survival go, Matt Lewis's is one of the most dramatic in recent memory."

The book has been awarded the Mountbatten Maritime Award, Certificate of Merit, when it was said that "The style of the book makes it accessible to a wide public but it should also be essential reading for seafarers fishermen and yachtsmen as it concerns attitudes to safety and survival." The book has featured as Radio 4s book of the week. Since writing the book, Matt has become full time author and speaker.

Matt will talk about the sinking of the Sudur Havid and the process of becoming a celebrity author! The talk will start at 7.30pm on Tues Mar 31st in the Guide Sheiling (Broombank Terrace). Please come and join us.



Interested in joining a Book Club? 'Dust Jackets', Braemar's third (!) bookclub, has just formed and has spaces. It meets approximately once a month to read and discuss books. Marilyn can give you more information - either speak to Marilyn at the book talk on Mar 31st or give her a phone 41225

New Face for Braemar Tourism Group (BTG)

At the Annual General Meeting of the Braemar Tourism Group, Richard Baker stepped down after a three years as chair of the BTG. His successor Julian Fennema (owner of Callater Lodge Guest House) was accepted unanimously. Richard thanked the Group for its support during his term of office and highlighted the ongoing challenges faced by the community this year - he wished the new Committee well and was pleased to note that younger members had stepped up to serve the needs of the Business & Tourism Community.

New BTG Committee: Chair : J Fennema
Vice Chair: J Kinsella Secretary: L. McMeekin
Treasurer: D . Evans Ordinary Members: D Till, F McCulloch, S Hubbard, R Baker

Cairngorms Nature Initiative

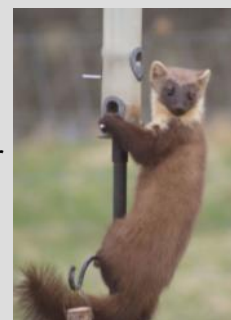
At the end of November, an evening with Pete Cairns, wildlife photographer, was organised in the village hall as part of the Cairngorms Nature Strategy. Part of the evening involved people prioritising species and habitats which they felt made Braemar a special place. The Cairngorms Nature Team will be approaching the community over the next few months to raise awareness and encourage involvement in the Nature Strategy.

For more information on the strategy:

<http://cairngorms.co.uk/look-after/cairngorms-nature>

Please feel free to contact Nick Mardall or Andy Ford if you wish to become more involved or would like further information

nick.dddp@btconnect.com
AndyFord@cairngorms.co.uk



Braemar Folk - On the Buses by Selena Hill

7.50 am leave Braemar for Aberdeen → Fuel up and clean bus → Service run from Tarves to Portlethen → Portlethen school kids to Newtonhill → Portlethen school kids to Cove → Service run back to Aberdeen → finally 16.45 service run to Braemar. A glimpse into the daily life of bus driver Stevie Tait. Stevie has been working for Stagecoach (formerly Northern Scottish) for 30 years, starting on the 7th Jan 1985!

Stevie was born in 1956 in Coatbridge, Lanarkshire, living there until he joined the army at 15 as a junior soldier. He spent the first two years at Gordon Barracks, Bridge of Don, where he was introduced to all aspects of outdoor sports including skiing and canoeing. Whilst in the army Stevie passed his Ski Party Leadership Course. Stevie spent 6 weeks skiing under BASI instruction in Bavaria, then used this training to teach with the Army at Glenshee. The team was based at the Dalrulzion Hotel and was formed to bring Youth Clubs and schools from inner cities to the country to learn to ski in the winter and canoe in the summer. During his time with the Army, Stevie also passed the Army Canoe Union Course and qualified as a British Canoe Union Assistant instructor. The Army Youth team disbanded in 1978 and Stevie was sent to Belize for a couple of months and then returned to Redford Barracks in Edinburgh. He left the army soon after. Stevie returned to Coatbridge for a short while, working at a new indoor sports centre but once the ski season got under way Stevie was back at Glenshee, initially as a ski instructor with Action Holidays and then as a full time lift operator with the Glenshee Chairlift Company. Whilst with the army Stevie had met Liz, who had been working at the Glenshee Cafe. The romance had blossomed but with Liz living in the Old Station House, Braemar, and Stevie back at his old accommodation at the Dalrulzion, Stevie wanted to move to Braemar. He got his first job as a barman in the old Invercauld Bar, with live-in accommodation. Liz and Stevie married in 1980, with Claire being born in 1981 and Richard following soon after. Stevie had joined the retained fire service in Braemar and in 1982 joined the full time service in Aberdeen. This involved 16 weeks training in Gullane. Stevie then worked in Aberdeen between Anderson Drive Station and Kings Street Station, commuting every day. Stevie resigned from full time fire service and returned to the Braemar retained fire service where he remained for another 10 years.

Stevie's brother-in-law, Jimmy, was the Braemar bus driver and when a job became available in Ballater he let Stevie know. That was 30 years ago! Stevie spent 18 years commuting to Ballater and when Jimmy moved 12 years ago, Stevie was offered the permanent driver's job in Braemar. And he is still driving today! Stevie is known to many an Academy pupil!

Stevie is a keen golfer, though he came to the sport later than most. He mainly started to keep Richard company and to encourage him. He eventually grew to love the sport and theirs is a partnership that continues to this day. Over the years Stevie has done a few DIY jobs in the village from painting/decorating to grass cutting but these are all things of the past now. Stevie and Liz spend a lot of their time looking after their two gorgeous grandchildren, Lilli and Eva. So next time you take the 201 to Ballater or Aberdeen say 'Hi' to Stevie.



Crathie Opportunity Holidays (COH) would be delighted to hear from anyone interested in becoming a Friend of COH. This could involve helping out at some of our events, or joining the team who host our coffee mornings for guests, or just a bit of gardening. These are not onerous tasks and Friends come along when they can. If you would like to join us, please phone Maggie ☎ 42100.

Preparations are underway for welcoming our guests in 2015 and we hope for a repeat of the busy 2014 season. Our major fundraisers will be our Golf Day in October and another of our successful Film Evenings in the V&A Halls. Further details of these events will follow in due course. Our book, "Essays on Life" by Thomas Mitchell, Farmer, is still available. Copies can be obtained from Maggie on the above contact number.

During the year, it is intended to build a new reception/office building and also to replace the current oil fired boiler with a biomass system using wood pellets to help reduce our heating costs. As always, thank you to all our local friends and supporters.

Kindrochit Castle

Pete Mulvey

A recent inspection of the repair works has confirmed that they have survived the winter with little damage - although there is evidence that medieval moles may be at work!

The intention now is to open the site to the public at the end of March with a small ceremony featuring children from the Primary School and at which a new flag, which has been designed by the pupils, will be unveiled. Later in the year, probably in June, there is to be a formal opening of the ruins which will be conducted by an invited dignitary - and it is hoped that many people from the community will attend both of these occasions to demonstrate the village's support for this project.

New interpretation boards have now also been prepared by the Council along with information leaflets which will be available free to visitors on the site - from a stand quite close to a newly installed donations box! All money collected from there will then be available, together with an initial donation from Aberdeenshire Council, to the 'Friends of Kindrochit Castle' for any use which they decide will enhance or 'add value' to the attraction in the future. The new leaflets also direct visitors to Braemar Castle where they can receive a 10% discount on entry fees. Some of these leaflets are to be distributed to B&Bs and hotels in the village so that owners can inform their guests about these visitor attractions.

St Margaret's Project

Pete Mulvey

The most exciting new development from St Margaret's is the establishment of a Schools Choral Festival, planned for **Friday 18th September 2015**. We are extremely fortunate that Professor Paul Mealor of Aberdeen University is to be personally involved in the event as a 'critical friend' to provide assistance and private adjudications for each choir. The event will be called '**Braemar Sings! – Schools' Choral Festival**' and will be non-competitive but will focus rather on encouraging young people to sing.

In this, the first experimental year, choirs from five local schools with a known choral tradition, will be invited to participate - but it is hoped that in the future the festival will develop and be even more extensive - possibly also to include adult groups. Public access to rehearsals throughout the day will be encouraged and the Festival will then culminate in an evening performance by each individual choir followed by a performance of all of the choirs together - which will be conducted by Professor Mealor.

Each choir will be asked to perform a 10 minute programme of their own choice, 2 or 3 items to



include one Scottish piece, possibly from their own area. They will be asked to submit their programme in advance and will also be asked to prepare a set piece of music which they will perform collectively with the other choirs.

During the morning of Sept 18th each choir will be given a 45 minute slot in which to rehearse - starting at 10.00 am. At 2.00pm all choirs will meet with Paul Mealor for an hour to rehearse the collective piece. Free time in the afternoon will allow for a visit to Braemar Castle and a special BBQ. The public performance at St Margaret's will begin at 6.00pm. Tickets will be available for members of the public priced £7.50. Each choir will perform their programme in turn followed by the collective piece conducted by Paul Mealor.

The acoustic qualities and joy of singing in St Margaret's is already being recognised among the choral community in Scotland and this has resulted in a Glasgow based choir - The Royal School of Church Music - Scottish Voices approaching us for permission to perform a Choral Evensong in the building in May of this year.

Other developments on the project include some internal repairs which are soon to be undertaken so that the building can be opened to the public throughout the summer months as an additional free-to-enter attraction for visitors to the village.

Grant funding applications for the restoration works are currently being prepared for submission in May of this year with the assistance of Jura Consultants (a firm with a great reputation in this field) and this will hopefully prompt firm decisions to be made regarding the balance of Performing and Visual arts events - which will be most sustainable for the future of the project - and from that will be determined the type and extent of additional accommodation within the building which will be required to sustain these activities.

FRASER & MULLIGAN

Fraser & Mulligan are a long established and well known firm of solicitors and estate agents with offices centrally located in Ballater and Aberdeen. The Ballater office is headed up by our new partner Mary-Jay Morton who moved to Deeside 5 years ago after practising for several years in her home town of Melrose in the Scottish Borders. Practising as a rural solicitor and with a farming background, the transition to Deeside was an easy one for Mary-Jay.

While most people know the firm in Ballater for our property sales and letting expertise you may be surprised to learn that the firm also offers a wide variety of legal services including the administration of estates, preparation of Wills and Powers of Attorney, family law including advice on separation and divorce, commercial conveyancing and leasing, court work and notary public work.

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Resident Solicitors:

Mary-Jay Morton and Kathryn M Reid

Home Visits can be arranged

24 Bridge Street, Ballater, AB35 5QP

Tel No: 013397 55633 Fax No: 013397 55564

ballater@fraser-mulligan.co.uk www.fraser-mulligan.co.uk

Braemar Creative Arts Festival (BCAF) 2015, October 21-25

Plans are being put in place for this year's festival - but in a new departure preceding the festival in October BCAF is organising a series of mini festivals. The first of these is the Science Festival, March 19-22, the second event will be a drama weekend April 25/26 (details below), and the next event planned will be a ukulele workshop day Saturday May 23 (more below).

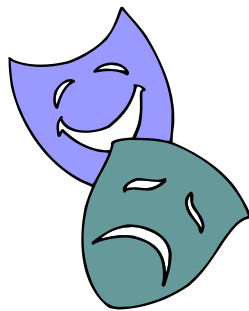
Drama Group

Carole Williams of the SCDA is offering a weekend of drama workshops 25/26 April. This is open to anybody in the village of any age and I will guarantee that you will have a wonderful time.

Carole is an excellent teacher and gets the best out of everybody. Call Marilyn ☎41225 for more details.

The local Murder Mystery players would welcome a few more men in the group. Most of the productions are short with not very many lines to learn and the productions at the castle have been a sell out the last two years. The dates this year are 15 & 16 May. Please get in touch with Marilyn ☎41225 if you would like to join the group or if you would like to put your name down for tickets for the performance dinner at the Castle.

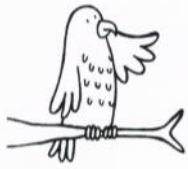
Marilyn Baker



Ukulele fever hits Braemar...

Finlay Allison delivered a series of ukulele workshops in Braemar during the 2014 Arts Festival and since the festival a ukulele strumming group has formed. The group currently meets at the Moorfield Hotel on a Friday evening from 7.30pm. The group has grown and now numbers over 20 players - if you fancy having a go, come and join us, we are all relative beginners. The ukulele is inexpensive, small and portable, not too loud (!) and great fun to play especially in a group. Principally an accompanying instrument, it is very accessible to those with little or no musical background - with a handful of chords you can strum along to a multitude of tunes. Such is the ukulele 'fever' that we have persuaded Finlay to come and give a one day workshop on May 23 in advance of his repeat visit to the festival proper in October. He's a great teacher. For more information on ukulele matters ☎ Liz 41030. **Liz Robertson**





Junior buzzard

The Junior Buzzard page for this issue has been written by Hamish Farquharson, aged 15 (*and what a great job, thank you Hamish Ed.*) If you would like to have a shot at writing the Junior Buzzard page for the next issue, please contact Liz ☎41030.

Junior buzzard page by Hamish Farquharson aged 15

Name: Hamish Robert Farquharson **Birthday:** 16th April, Aries **Hobbies:** Skiing, piano
Clubs: Youth club, Explorer Scouts and Army Cadets. I also volunteer at beaver Scouts.
Family: Dad, Mum and brother Findlay aged 18 **Pets:** 2 cats, Socks and Splodge
Ambition: To be a Pilot.

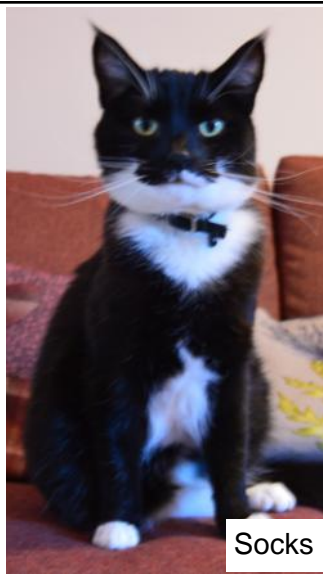
Appeal to the Deeside Knitwits

The youth of the village love our knitted youth shelter and think it looks really cool. We do however find the seats really uncomfortable to sit on. We are appealing to the ladies of the Deeside Knitwits to come along to Youth club one night and teach us how to knit squares so we can cover the seats. Youth club is every 2 weeks on a Wednesday night in The Sheiling, please let one of the youth leaders know if you can help, thank you. (Youth leaders are: Sue Sherrard, Maggie MacAlpine Joanne Morris, Shaila Daniels, Matthew Holley, Sheila Anderson and Erin MacAlpine)

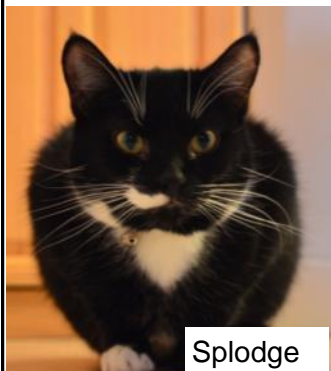


Paws for Thought (feline)

We are brothers and our names are Socks and Splodge. We live at Linn Cottage with our servants the Farquharsons. We are very good looking black and white moggies. I am Socks and I am fat although it is really just thick fur. I am Splodge and I am skinny that is because my big brother Socks eats all my food. We are very well be-



Socks



Splodge

haved and only bring presents to the servants occasionally, usually a mouse, shrew or baby rabbit. For some reason these gifts are not appreciated. Our favourite servant is Hamish because he feeds us and lets us sleep on his bed.

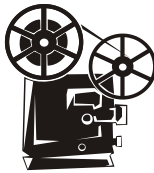
Extracts from an essay written by Hamish on 'Why Government Funding for ski resorts in Scotland is unfair'

"There is not a level playing field when it comes to ski centres in Scotland and the amount of government funding that they receive... Some have received larger sums than others. Nevis Range was started with public money. The assistance given to Cairngorm Mountain Ltd has been immense and completely disproportionate compared to the other ski areas... over £19million towards the funicular railway. The Lecht built their new café on the Moray side of the road so as to receive £330,000 towards the construction which cost £1 million and they were also gifted 40% of the funds needed for a £100,000 bike trial project. In 2008 Glencoe received £100,000 from Highlands and Islands Enterprises and this was not a loan but a cash injection... Although not £19 million, Glenshee is to receive some money to improve facilities and structures and are planning to replace the Tiger chairlift ... a step in the right direction."

What's on in and around your village?

Brigadoon - Coming Soon

The 1950's Hollywood blockbuster is set in a wee Highland village that comes to life just one day every hundred years. If you haven't seen this classic movie then you have a treat in store on April 18th. Look out all your tartan stuff (American style!) and come along - bonnets with big feathers, shawls, kilts and tartan skirts galore. (Dressing up not compulsory but a bit of fun!) A delicious Highland buffet supper will be served with soft drinks, tea and coffee on offer - or BYO. There will also be an auction of original pieces of art or craft (donations to auction also very welcome). Tickets £10 will be available from Louise at the Lochcarron shop in the Mews from 6 April onwards.



Village Bin Collections - Tuesdays



Wheelie Bins:

Mar 17th 31st

Apr 14th 28th

May 12th 26th

Recycling:

Mar 24th

Apr 7th 21st

May 5th 19th

Date	Event
16 Mar Mon & 20 Apr & 18 May	Community Council Meeting Braemar (third Monday of the month), 7.30pm Braemar Primary School. Observers welcome.
Mar 19-22	Braemar Science Festival - for full details see separate insert
Mar 20 Fri	Braemar Golf Club opens for season
Mar 31 Tue	Last Man Off - Book Talk, Guide Sheiling 7.30pm
Apr 2 Thur	Catherine Nardiello, concert pianist, performs a pre-Easter programme. Village Hall, 7.30pm. £7 adults £5 concessions
Apr 4 Sat	Braemar Castle reopens
Apr 5 Sun	Easter Afternoon Tea Braemar Castle
Apr 5 Sun	Easter Egg Trail at Mar Lodge. £2/trail. Operates between 10am and 4pm. Collect trail sheets from the Stag Ballroom.
Apr 11 Sat	Mending Our Ways. Practical conservation day mending paths with Balmoral Ranger Service. Free. Meet at Spittal of Glen Muick. Booking essential 013397 55059. For more ranger events visit www.balmoralcastle.com/walks.htm
Apr 11 Sat	Coffee Morning, Lochnagar Distillery for Archie Foundation
Apr 18 Sat	Brigadoon - film showing in the Village Hall, 7.30pm. £10 includes supper. Dress OTT or tartan! Organised by BCAF. Tickets from Louise in the Mews (see info left)
Apr 19 Sun	Dowsing for Archaeology BLHG, 7.30pm, Village Hall
Apr 19 Sun	Awful Ancestors day, Braemar Castle. More info www.braemarcastle.co.uk
Apr 25/26	Weekend drama course with Carole Williams, SCDA tutor. More information page 10 (BCAF 'pop-up' event)
May 3 Sun	Open Doors evening Masonic Lodge, Ballater BLHG
May 9 Sat	CLAN Tartan Trek - more info page 2
May 15/16	Murder Mystery Dinners Braemar Castle - info page 10
May 23 Sat	One day Ukulele course. Details page 10. Braemar Creative Arts Festival (BCAF) 'pop-up' event
May 23 Sat	Dead Wood Creation - Mar Lodge Local Interest Group. Help with the Mar Lodge forest plan by using ring-barking to create dead wood within the plantations, 9am - 5pm. For more information on this and other group activities contact Shaila Rao ☎20165 srao@nts.org

Please send news/articles for the Buzzard to:

info@braemarbuzzard.org.uk

Deadline for next edition: May 31st 2015

Website: www.braemarbuzzard.org.uk

Adverts: Cost £15.00 per eighth of page

Contact Maggie MacAlpine ☎ 41245